I Don't Care If Mary Jane Gets Saved Or Not
—originally published in *Chattahoochee Review*

I can't lie, I tried to imagine myself
in Spiderman's grip—my damsel-in-distress
scream strung through the city like Christmas lights—
I really did. But my black ass would never be

in Spiderman's grip. My "damsel-in-distress"
don't look like Kirsten Dunst or Emma Stone—I looked,
I really did. But my black ass would never be
dainty enough to be rescued by a white hero. The movie villains

don't look like Kirsten Dunst or Emma Stone—I looked—
but the women who terrorize me in real life are
dainty enough to be rescued by a white hero. The movie villains
always come for the white heroine, and she will cry,

but the women who terrorize me in real life are
strategic, hammering out an axe with tears. The playbook goes:
always come for the white heroine and she will cry
wolf. Cry danger. Call the police. The 911 call

strategic, hammering out an axe with tears. The playbook goes—
there is an African-American woman threatening me; cry
wolf; cry *danger*; call the police. The 911 call
a masterclass on acting. Mary Jane would kill me if it was in the script—

There is an African-American woman threatening me—cry
until Spiderman dropped from the sky. The way I play dead,
a masterclass on acting. Mary Jane would kill me if it was in the script,
because what else could I be but the villain

until Spiderman dropped from the sky? The way I play dead
in the cocoon of Spiderman's web, you can tell I've practiced.
Because what else could I be but the villain?
I can't lie. I tried to imagine, myself.